C99-40

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

FACULTY OF MUSIC

presents

Faculty Artist Series

ANTONIN KUBALEK

Piano

Friday, April 9, 1999
8:00 p.m.
Walter Hall

programme

DANIEL FOLEY
(b. 1952)

Carolina Rhapsody, Op. 33 (1991)*
(Canadian Premiere)

VÍTEZSLAV NOVÁK
(1870-1949)

Pan*, Op. 43 (1910)*
Tone poem in five movements
(North American Premiere)

1. Prologue/Prolog
2. Mountains/Hory
3. The Sea/More

INTERMISSION

***Pan*, Op. 43 (1910)**, continued

4. The Forest/Les
5. Women/Zena

** Commissioned by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (Toronto) for Antonin Kubalek, 1991.*

***Mr. John Jull will give a brief analysis of PAN prior to the performance.*

programme notes

DANIEL FOLEY (born 1952)
Carolina Rhapsody, Op. 33 (1991)

Thirty years ago, Antonin Kubalek gave his first Canadian recital at Walter Hall, having just arrived from Prague. At that time I was just beginning my formal studies at the North Carolina School of the Arts. In those halcyon days, the composition students at the school enjoyed the special privilege of having electric pianos in their dorm rooms. This amenity brought forth a special interest from my pianist colleagues. Chief among these visitors was my next-door neighbor, Walter Knapp, who much preferred my conviviality to the chaos of the practice rooms. Thus it was then I got to know the piano repertoire from the ground up, as each evening brought forth new themes and new textures.

These memories remained with me when, in 1991, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation commissioned me to write a work for my dear friend Anton. The rhapsody is generally understood to represent a rather amorphous and romantic concept of musical form, though I chose this title for its original meaning of a form of Greek epic poetry that binds together verses from disparate sources. Most of all, the concept of a rhapsody implied for me an approach that would mirror this artist's propulsive and emotional approach to the instrument. The "Carolina" in the title is both a reference to my undergraduate days as well as an homage to the Kubalek's young daughter, Karolina.

–Daniel Foley

VITEZSLAV NOVAK (1870-1949)
PAN, Op. 43 (1910)
Tone Poem in Five Movements

Vitezslav Novak acquired the solid foundation of his compositional craft during his studies with Antonin Dvorak at the Prague Conservatory of Music. Novak contributed to almost every domain of musical composition and in each created high and permanent artistic values: art songs *(The Valley of the New Kingdom, Melancholy Songs of Love, Spring)*, chamber music (especially the Second String Quartet), symphonic poems *(In the Tatras, Eternal Desire, Toman and the Wood Nymph)*, followed by two large-scaled vocal symphonies *(Autumn* and *May Symphonies)*, cantata *(The Storm)*, and finally, operas *(The Zvikov Imp, Karlstein, The Lamp, Godfather's Legacy)* and ballets *(Signorina Giovantu, Nikotina)*. During the years of Novak's maturity arose a series of significant keyboard works: *My May* (1898), *Sonata*

Eroica (1900), *Songs of Autumn Nights, Slovacko Suite* (both in 1903) and *Pan* (1910). Much later Novak enriched children's piano literature with two works, Six Sonatinas (1919), and the cycle *Youth* (1920), which ranked him, in his output for children, immediately alongside Schumann, Debussy, Bartok and Prokofiev.

The crowning work of his production for piano is undoubtedly the monumental *Pan*, designated "a tone-poem." Its five movements are a passionate celebration of nature, life, love and fertility.

The *Prologue* introduces the Greek god Pan, enticing the Nymphs with his shepherd's pipe. Its conclusion contains anticipatory illusions to the subsequent movements:

Mountains, calm, majestic and elevated;

The Sea, gay, playful and high-spirited;

The Forest, mysterious, lit by shafts of muted sunlight and breathing yearning desire;

Woman, a poem with the greatest variety of moods. Twice it sets off with dynamic verve and twice it stops short in face of her magnetism and charm. The third time it leads to a whirling tarantella of inflamed senses. The tranquil final section is a hymn of praise to nature in its eternal round of regeneration and of thanks for the gift of life and all its joys and beauties.

In this work the pianist is faced with a difficult role: to express the innumerable gradations of expression, to master the immense technical difficulties, to comprehend and give a unified and plastic interpretation of a work whose dimensions fill half an evening's program, and to do proper justice to all its aspects–of which the dynamic and polyphonic make quite exceptional demands on the performer's powers.

Pianists have so far avoided this composition on the grounds that, when placed at the beginning of the program, it exhausts the listener for the rest of the concert; and if it is put at the end, the listener is too exhausted to take it all in. The first to present *Pan* as a complete work was Vaclav Stepan in 1911. He has been followed by no more than a handful of artists: at home, Gselhofer, Maxian, Hala, and abroad, Pollak and Orenstein. The work has been most successfully propagated by Frantisek Maxian–Antonin Kubalek's former teacher–thanks to his frequent and admirable performances.

Antonin Kubalek is this year's recipient of "The Drapell Award for Artistic Excellence". This award is given to those rare artists whose achievement helps to free the arts from technocratic or commercial pressures which are now so prevalent in our culture.

The award consists of a work of art - chosen from Drapell's studio - and a citation. The citation reads:

> ***"To Antonin Kubalek, whose musicianship changes us into poets through the intangible and mysterious feelings which only few masters command and which alone make our life truly human."***

Painter and sculptor, Joseph Drapell, is perhaps better known internationally than he is in his hometown, Toronto. His works have been purchased by the following museums: Guggenheim Museum - New York City, Museum of Fine Art - Boston, Museum of Modern Art /Foundation Ludwig - Vienna, Austria, British Museum - London, and many other collections. Born in Bohemia in 1940, escaped from Soviet dominated Prague in 1965, and living in Toronto since 1970, Joseph Drapell has exhibited worldwide. In 1971, Drapell purchased an island in Georgian Bay which he considers his spiritual home and from which he derives much of his inspiration.